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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE SPECTER OF NAZISM

THE ERUPTIONS of anti-Semitism in Western Germany can no longer be described as isolated and inconsequential. "Unfortunate incidents"—caused by "irresponsible anti-Semitic elements"—demand, perhaps, no more response than the "regret" and "embarrassment" which have been expressed over such episodes in the past. But regret and embarrassment are not adequate responses to the evil thing which is now revealed.

Beginning, cruelly, on Christmas Eve, the fever of hatred against Jews flared up first in Cologne, then spread to Berlin, to Nuremberg, to other West German communities; it broke out later in Vienna, in London, in Glasgow, in New York. Its foulness may well be rising to the surface in other places even as these words are being written. What is worse, the official declarations of Chancellor Adenauer's government reveal the familiar reluctance to take hold of a painful fact, the familiar expressions of righteousness and virtue, the familiar recourse to charges of anti-Germanism and falsehood on the part of those who speak or write of what is happening in Germany. Even in this country, the outbursts of anti-Semitism in West Germany have been deplored in some quarters chiefly because they make for bad public relations and political problems for an important ally in the cold war against Communism.

Anti-Semitism in West Germany, it has been said, is no more significant than anti-Semitism anywhere else, and any relation between anti-Semitic outbreaks in West Germany and a resurgence of Nazism there is angrily denied. Nazism is dead, say the Germans, and need not be referred to.

Unfortunately, neither of these statements is true. Even when it is shameful and frightening, history cannot be denied. That five million Jews were murdered by the government of a highly cultured, European Christian people is a monstrous, hideous fact, for them and for the rest of the world. That Nazism is quite dead becomes every day an increasingly dubious judgment, but even if it were quite dead, it would still need to be referred to.

PERHAPS this is why the evil of anti-Semitism still hangs over our heads: that it has not really been faced. One commentator on the question of anti-Semitism in West Germany reminded his readers of the record-breaking crowds of West Germans who sat stunned through performances of "The Diary of Anne Frank." He did not remind his readers that many of those who were deeply moved by the play nonetheless declared, "I don't believe it." And it has been reported over and over that West German history texts have solved the problems raised by Hitler and World War II by ignoring them. A recent poll of German youth showed an astonishing number who knew (or would admit) of Hitler only that he reduced unemployment, improved roads, accomplished much for Germany, etc. Some half-dozen years ago, a survey taken by the United States High Commissioner's office in Bonn revealed even then that anti-Semitism in West Germany was growing, not declining. A majority of the Germans polled at that time believed that Germans need not feel guilty for what was done to Jews under the Third Reich and need not feel responsible for it.

That Germans are reluctant to accept this horrible burden of guilt is easy to understand. What they cannot bear to look at is a vision of evil which is and must be terrifying. We too, the non-German peoples of the Western world, have not been eager to look upon it. With our own share of guilt, we have not been eager to examine the obscene thing that was Nazism and ask ourselves how it

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could come about, among people who read the same books, listened to the same music, went to the same churches, shared with us what we are proud to call the heritage of Western culture.

Thus, over the years, the poisonous complicity in the pretense that the gas ovens—and worse—were like a bad dream, to be thrust from our minds quickly lest it spoil our waking mood. Thus, over the years, the gradual embracing of a "practical" policy toward West Germany, a policy determined largely by fear of Communism and characterized largely by a "forgive and forget" attitude toward the monstrousness of the Hitler era.

There can be no question of forgiving, of course. It is not for us to forgive. But it is perilous for us to forget. We must remember, as we have not remembered, and so must the German people, as they have not. For only if we admit its existence can we hope to exorcise the evil which took such hold of men. What happened in those terrible decades? How did it happen? Why? These are the questions we must face, German and non-German alike, not for the sake of blame and accusation, but to save ourselves now.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

WE HAVE been following, with considerable interest, recent reports in the newspapers on the case of Hollywood writer Louis Pollock. Mr. Pollock, it seems, was until five years ago a successful scriptwriter. Then all of a sudden it appeared that he had lost either his writing touch or his luck, or both, for he could not sell a thing.

Recently, however, Mr. Pollock's luck turned, for a producer friend finally broke down and told him his name was on the Hollywood blacklist. After further investigation, Mr. Pollock learned that five years earlier his identity had been confused with that of a man who had refused to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee —a considerable confusion, since the reluctant witness spelled his last name with an "a" rather than an "o," was actually a clothier rather than a writer, and lived in a different city.

Once he learned the facts, writer Pollock did succeed in getting things straightened out more or less satisfactorily. He managed to get a letter from the House committee, presumably certifying to the correct spelling of his name, and got himself struck off the blacklist. Now he is in a position to sell scripts again, five years richer in experience and five years poorer in income as a result of the mix-up.

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The first accounts of all this appeared in the papers some weeks ago, and we have been withholding our own comment to see what apologists for the blacklist might have to say on the subject, beyond their usual denial that the blacklist exists at all, accompanied by the usual affirmation that it is a good thing anyway. If such explanatory statements have appeared, however, we missed them, and we will have to proceed without them.

Mr. Pollock was, of course, the victim of mistaken identity, and there may be some who would say such incidents are unfortunate but unavoidable, although they would be unlikely to cite the disreputable tag about not being able to make an omelet without breaking eggs. But to us the Pollock case illustrates once more the dangers of applying to non-security areas what are essentially security measures. This incident was especially newsworthy, of course, but it simply dramatizes the fact that when economic sanctions are applied in cases like this, without any of the protection normally offered by due process of law, the result is at best a dubious and risky business.

HIGHER AND HIGHER

FEW OF the statistics so liberally made available at year's end are more informative about trends in the American way of life than a Federal Reserve Board report on this country's consumers' goods production of the past twelve years. Marked changes in American buying habits are reflected in the figures for a long list of items whose rise in production is many times the national population increase of twenty-three per cent during the period.

Items which started in 1947 from a low production base would be expected to register sharp increases, especially T.V. sets, home air-conditioners and domestic clothes-driers. There may not have been a great number of boats around in the 1940's, but it does come as somewhat of a surprise to find increased boat production in the very highest bracket, too. It is a reflection of the ever greater emphasis on leisure in this prosperous country—which is also manifested by the big percentage increases in the use of residential electricity and the production of cars and soft drinks.

The list of items whose increased production failed to keep pace with the present annual 1.7 per cent population increase in the United States throws further light on recent changes in our consuming and living habits. One of them is grains and bakery products—which appears to indicate that many can now afford to eat more meat. It is not too hard to account for the restricted increases in newspaper circulation. But three other items in this comparatively depressed category are susceptible of a wide and varied range of explanations: wines and liquor, automobile parts and hosiery.

There is an interesting list of items whose production actually declined in a period during which the population of the United States was increasing by thirty millions. This group is topped, understandably enough, by home radios, but it includes as well cooking stoves and woven floor coverings, together with men's suits and coats. Here the indicated decline in domestic comfort is surpassed statistically by the shrinkage in outlay for men's dress. Both are seemingly sacrificed to electrico-mechanical means of removing obstacles to mobility and to greater capacity to range far and wide from home.

During this same period the rate for the over-all average increase in consumers' goods production more than doubled that of the nation's population increase. And production of these goods has been accelerating ever more sharply in the past four years. The general upsurge in America's material living standards—in which certain localities and certain occupations fail to share—continues to gather speed.

This trend has a marked impact on Wall Street, with a large increase in the number of individual investors, an incessant demand for more and more stock shares and a consequent rise in market values. But in the past two years eighteenth-century French furniture has done even better, while the mark-up on such thirteenth- and fifteenth-century masterpieces as early Bibles, prayer books and manuscripts is not far behind. French impressionist paintings continue to mount in market value.

Along with government bonds, precious stones and platinum and gold, art objects in America have long served as a "hedge" against inflation or as a protection of personal wealth against an impending depression. In recent years the growing demand for them also reflects individual changes in status which are the inevitable accompaniment of protracted prosperity.

WISE AS A HATTER

A GOOD CASE could be made that the taxpayers in many large American cities are subsidizing industries which pay marginal or less-than-marginal wages. Such an argument would

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certainly have validity in New York, where thousands of Puerto Rican workers are at the very bottom of the economic ladder. In many cases, the wages they receive must be supplemented in the form of city funds for dependent children, and in almost all cases a week or two between low-paying jobs makes reliance on welfare help unavoidable.

New York is obviously not alone in this matter. Other metropolitan areas have the same problem with workers in low-paying industries, even if in less pronounced form. No matter what particular city is involved, there seems to be no good reason why the taxpayers should subsidize sweatshop industries, and serious consideration of the problem where it exists might well lead to pressure for state legislation for higher minimum wages. But in the absence of such effective minimum standards, a recent action by the Hatters' union in New York is worth noting.

The hat and millinery industry is one in which there are many Puerto Rican workers, almost all of them poorly paid and at the bottom of the industry's pay scale. Taking note of this situation, the skilled workers in the union recently decided to pass up a wage increase for themselves, voting instead in favor of giving all increases in wage rates to the industry's unskilled and semi-skilled workers. As a result, the union's two thousand lowest paid workers will soon receive an additional five dollars a week; the other nine thousand members will receive no wage increase at all.

Impressive as this gesture is, of course, no one imagines that it will solve the problem of subsistence-level wages, even in the one industry concerned. But it might very well start other unions toward an examination of their own policy in this matter, especially those in which the unskilled Puerto Rican seems to be regarded as a dues-payer and little else. And it is just possible that this action by the Hatters might make people realize that even generous gestures are no substitute for wise public policy and good legislation.

CIVIL RIGHTS IN 1960

THE PROBLEM of achieving an effective civil rights program will be one of the great domestic issues of 1960. Even if this were not an election year, the President and Congress would feel the growing pressure to increase present efforts and to strengthen present laws. But it *is* an election year, and the question of civil rights will inevitably become an intensely charged political issue. Each potential candidate for the Presidency will be called upon to answer various questions: Are present laws and programs sufficient? Should they be revised or reconstructed? What positive recommendations can be made?

In the face of this inescapable challenge, the disposition of the case of Mack Charles Parker will have telling effect. While awaiting trial for rape last April, Mack Parker was placed in a small jail in Poplarville, Miss. But in the night a group of white men broke into the jail, dragged him resisting to their cars, shot him twice through the chest and fed his body to the river. Although the F.B.I. launched a large-scale investigation and was prepared to submit abundant evidence, the county grand jury called no F.B.I. witness, asked to see no reports, and returned no indictment. The case, apparently, was closed on this cynical note. This lynching would join other lynchings which were briefly noted and soon forgotten.

Attorney General William P. Rogers, however, calling such a procedure a travesty, asked for a particular study of the situation, and the Justice Department requested a Federal grand jury investigation. If a majority of the twenty-three Mississippians on the Federal grand jury panel decide that civil rights were violated, the Justice Department will be able to enter the case and to offer as evidence what is, apparently, acknowledged fact in the Mississippi community. For there seems to be little mystery about how and when Mack Parker was lynched or even about the identity of many people who were involved.

In the case of Mack Parker, it is not then a mystery but a problem that faces the Southern community, the Federal Government and the nation. It is the key problem to any meaningful civil rights program: how is justice to be administered under law in communities where prejudice allows the citizens to be indifferent to or contemptuous of civilized standards of justice? The difficulties under which the Justice Department is operating are clear from the fact that it felt called upon to reenter a case from which it had previously withdrawn and that the Attorney General justified this action by referring to laws of the Reconstruction era whose constitutionality has been questioned.

Even if the Justice Department is effective in this case, the travesty of justice offered by the county grand jury cannot be forgotten. And if the Justice Department proves ineffective, even those most blinded by prejudice must acknowledge, even if they protest, the need for a more effective civil rights program.

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The Mobile American

Every year, despite the traditional suspicion of the man who can't stay put, more and more Americans are on the move

by JOHN P. SISK

A HALF CENTURY ago H. G. Wells predicted in *A Modern Utopia* that the population of Utopia would be migratory "beyond any earthly precedent." By this standard modern Americans have a pronounced utopian characteristic, even though in other respects (by refusing to give up merchandising, advertising and interest from investments) they fall short of Wells's vision.

In the ten years following World War II, an extraordinary total of fifty million people, more than a fourth of the nation's population, changed homes, whether for reasons of comfort, status, employment or sheer restlessness. According to Vance Packard, twenty thousand families move and face new neighbors every day. The *Statistical Abstracts of the United States* gives this picture for the period April, 1954 to April, 1957: about twenty per cent of the population per year moved to a different house; thirteen per cent moved within the same county; slightly over three per cent remained in the state and about the same number moved to a different state.

At the same time, according to the National Association of Travel Organizations, two-thirds of the nation is spending over twenty-five billion dollars annually on travel in this country and abroad. Home itself is becoming increasingly mobile. *Business Week* estimated that by the end of 1957 three million people were living in one million mobile units, some of them so large that in certain areas they were banned from the highways on weekends.

Address changing has become such a commonplace characteristic of American life, in fact, that most people accept it without question. If they have any explanation for it, it is likely to be the one expressed by Paul Mundy for *The Grail*: "The evidence shows that above-average mobility is characteristic of families where the father is an unskilled or semi-skilled worker."

Mr. Sisk, a regular contributor, is a member of the faculty of Gonzaga University, Spokane.

The Bureau of the Census gives some substance to this belief. It reports that for the year April, 1956 to April, 1957 nearly thirty per cent of the unemployed changed residence as compared with nineteen per cent of the employed. The unemployed also tended to move farther. During the same period nonwhites were more mobile than whites, while a greater proportion of nonwhites moved to another state. Obviously one cannot make a facile equation of unemployed and nonwhite with unskilled and semi-skilled, but in an age of specialization and white supremacy considerable correlation can be expected. The figures also suggest a tendency of the better educated to move less often, since they are less likely to be nonwhite and unskilled.

WILLIAM H. WHYTE, Jr., however, (writing before the 1957 census report) gives us quite a different reading. Working with *Time's* study "They Went to College," the experience of direct-mail people and long-distance movers, he comes to these conclusions: the college man is more likely to move than the high school man, and the higher the college man's grades the more likely he is to move; address changes are more frequent among those in the $5000 and over bracket; roughly three-quarters of all moves by long-distance movers are accounted for by members of large organizations, including personnel of the Army and Navy.

Apparently the most significant movers for Mr. Whyte are those for whom moving is a necessary result of the work they do and whose work tends to be relatively well paid: they can afford long-distance movers (or are important enough to have their moving paid for by their employers); many of them subscribe to *Fortune* (14.8 per cent of whose subscribers changed addresses in 1954) or belong with (to quote the ad) "the 900,000 affluent families who look to *Holiday* for a rewarding experience"; they live in suburbs and exurbs far from the exploding metropolis.

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Nevertheless, there are many who, if they do not subscribe to *Fortune* or *Holiday,* nevertheless swell the census figures by moving into the exploding metropolis and the living space twelve million people have vacated there in the last ten years. There are the depressed minorities (Negroes and Puerto Ricans, for instance) for whom moving is not so much part of the job or a way of life as it is a search for both. There are the millions who have moved since World War II simply because they can afford better living conditions but whose place of employment has remained unchanged. There are Mr. Packard's status-movers, whose identification, because of the relationship between status and improved living conditions, is not as easy as Mr. Packard seems to imply. And there are what might be called the neurotic movers, whose compulsive inability to stay in one place is aggravated by every moving van they see.

IN THE face of all this mobility, it is interesting to note the extent to which in advertising and in all the media of popular entertainment the American family is represented as a stable, community-oriented group which has sunk its roots deep in a particular place and has no intention of pulling them up. Such a picture is in relation to the pejorative connotation of "migrant" and to the tendency among migrants not to think of themselves as such, but to think of all moves as a temporary matter which will terminate in *home,* though not necessarily the home they started from.

There is in the popular culture a traditional suspicion of the man who can't stay put, who passes restlessly from place to place and job to job. You can plan nothing around him, build nothing with his help; employers are wary of him; mothers warn their daughters against him. He evokes images of the tramp, the bum, the soldier, the sailor and, nowadays, the beatnik. All of these are represented in popular story as uncommitted to a particular place and, paradoxically, each of them is capable of becoming the hero of another story, that of the rejection of the particular place in the interests of individual freedom.

The particular place is ideally the small place. Thus the image of conservative stability was once located in the small town or farming community represented as a place of pastoral innocence and simplicity. As a center of virtue and the good "natural" life it was opposed to the corrupting big city, from which came the nomadic city slickers who (as in Clarence Buddington Kelland's "Scattergood Baines" stories) were no match for the native shrewdness of the local hero. It was quite usual for the small town or farm girl to be momentarily dazzled by the sophisticated city man but ultimately to realize her mistake and settle for her local admirer, who was distinguished not so much for his ambition or his sexual attraction (sex was one of the evil city things) as for his steadfastness and simple virtue. If the glamorous city nomad did get the girl in the end it was because (as in Phil Stong's "State Fair") he had been converted through love to a simpler and spiritually more satisfying way of life.

Sentimental and anachronistic as this story may seem it is still a powerful factor in American life, perhaps because it is itself so adaptable and mobile. The small town can become the small neighborhood in the big city: an island of homely, if poverty-stricken, natural virtue centered around home and mother, a haven one leaves at his own peril, and to which at any rate he can always return for spiritual sustenance. Or it can become the suburb or exurb where community involvements are the rituals meant to recapture the saving virtues of the small good stable place, and where the old provincial conviction that the city is evil reestablishes life on the familiar plane of moral allegory.

Such an image expresses the belief that change, mobility and complexity are evil, and is a way of cushioning and controlling the impact of a civilization in which there is so much change, mobility and complexity. Mother's Day, "Oklahoma!" and Westport, Conn., are closely related successes.

NEVERTHELESS, as Mr. Whyte says, "The man who leaves home is not the exception in American society but the key to it"—and one might add that in varying degrees he has always been. The story of the small, stable place, therefore, has to be accommodated to the facts of life, especially since those who value it also value material success.

Thus certain kinds of migrancy, even to the big city, are not only permitted but looked upon with complete approval. It is expected that the young will strike out and move around the world a bit and do a certain amount of job-hopping (the Bureau of the Census agrees: the highest proportion of changes of address is among the young adults). But if they have the right stuff in them they will settle down quickly, sink roots, become solid and, it is hoped, substantial upholders of a particular place.

And no matter how far they go or how fast they

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travel or how successful they become, they will never lose their fidelity to the place they started from. Their faith in it and all it stands for is the armor that protects them from dangerous aspirations in the courts of evil. Ideally, they will demonstrate their faith by ritual returns to the small good place for a recharging of spiritual batteries. The compelling quality of this story can be seen in the public's insistence that its pattern be forced upon successful people who have had lowly beginnings: as though the act of bringing the movie star back to Mom in humble glory and a four-page spread in *Life* were the result of a need beyond the control of *Life* itself.

The American writer, to be sure, is likely to find the small good place a mean, frustrating place which he must leave spiritually as well as physically if he is to find himself and do his work (and thus in the public mind he is easily confused with the over-reaching bad man who does not want to go home). He becomes a questing migrant, though his quest is often, like Thomas Wolfe's, complicated by his nostalgic involvement with his beginnings.

And when the writer's migrancy takes the extreme "subversive" form we see in Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* or Kerouac's *On the Road* we can understand why stability is such an important element in the popular mind and why mobility so often has to be disguised. Thus the true counter to Kerouac's Dean Moriarity is not someone like Thoreau (a great and disturbing migrant despite the fact that he had traveled much only in Concord), but the peripatetic and platitudinous comic strip character, Mary Worth: the perfectly mobile mother who brings the services of the small good place to her faithful or carries the true gospel to the heathen, as the case may be.

For millions of Americans the great experience of mobility was World War II. But if the amount of domestic and foreign migrancy was staggering, so were the means used to cushion its impact. The war was a harrowing and educating experience for many, but for far more, thanks to the P.X., the post theater, the Red Cross, the overseas editions of *Life* and *Time,* Coca Cola and junketing movie stars, home with all its intellectual limitations was kept just around the corner. They found themselves shuttling among islands of American civilization, encircled everywhere by "gooks," the generic term for all those millions who, one sometimes got the impression, had perversely chosen not to be Americans.

Similarly, Mr. Whyte, studying today's organization transients, finds that "more and more, the young couples who move do so only physically. With each move the *décor,* the architecture, the faces and the names may change; the people, the conversation, and the values do not—and sometimes the *décor* and the architecture don't either." The large organization itself is a stabilizing factor, as the army was for the G.I. Moving about in it one is not so much migrating as passing from department to department in a giant plant.

TRADITIONALLY the experience of different people and places is supposed to have a broadening effect. Thus some organizations look upon the transfer of personnel as a positively good thing that will help to produce the well-rounded executive. Besides, as Mr. Whyte quotes an I.B.M. executive, "the training [resulting from frequent transfers] makes our men interchangeable." Well-roundedness and interchangeability may have great business value, but in the present American context they are also the expression of the assumption that individual difference is an undesirable thing. In the same way, many who see our mobility as a factor working towards a greater cultural homogeneity assume that regional difference and cultural variety are on the whole divisive and bad things.

In any event, according to Mr. Whyte and Mr. Packard, there are strong forces working against the ideal of well-roundedness even among the organization movers: their status-seeking and their tendency to migrate between versions of the same place where people are as much like themselves as possible. Similarly, the wartime G.I. could travel around the globe and discover not that all men were brothers but that most men were "gooks" who bathe infrequently and had an insatiable lust for his chewing gum and his gear.

The belief that we are an extremely mobile people, then, needs to be severely qualified. In many ways we are, in spite of all our apparent movement, a very stationary, even static, people. Tocqueville saw this paradox over a century ago. "I think . . . that a perpetual stir prevails in the bosom of those [democratic] societies, and that rest is unknown there; but I think that men bestir themselves within certain limits, beyond which they hardly ever go. They are forever varying, altering, and restoring secondary matters; but they carefully abstain from touching what is fundamental."

To move and touch what is fundamental is to risk with Whitman:

> Sail forth—steer for the deep waters only,
> Reckless O soul, exploring, I with thee and thou with me,
> For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
> And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

We are not yet such voyagers, and perhaps there is something to be said for our prudence; for Whitman's enlightenment-romantic voyage might lead us only into the darkness it takes so little account of. His vision nevertheless can make us uneasily aware of the extent to which we have persuaded ourselves that all our motion is an advance.

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NEW DECADE, NEW PROBLEMS

IT WOULD be impossible to predict the specific international problems which will dominate the history of the nineteen sixties. But whatever they are, the following general issues seem unavoidable.

Survival: One of the first editorials I ever wrote for The Commonweal was about the nuclear dilemma. That was a full decade ago, at the beginning of the nineteen fifties. From the day it was announced in 1949 that Russia had the bomb, it was clear that another all-out war would mean total disaster for both sides. In the years since then the lethal effectiveness of armaments has been immeasurably increased. The utter futility of war is even clearer now. The "limited" war we fought in Korea ended in stalemate and produced another kind of frustration and futility. I conclude, therefore—and I hope not too sanguinely—that the fifties have taught all of us, Soviets included, that modern war is self-defeating. Only those hardy platonists who speak archly of "mere biological survival," as if mankind's interest in such a crass notion were an international liberal plot, hold out against the sheer facts of the case once they are understood.

A big question for the sixties may be this: Is disarmament politically possible at this late date? Did we let our golden opportunity pass? I am thinking of course of the fact that China will be getting the hydrogen bomb in a few years and that it is quite possible some of the smaller nations will be joining the nuclear club. When that happens, it may be too late for disarmament.

The China problem will probably dominate the nineteen sixties and may cause us more anguish than Russia ever did. A few years ago Red China wanted to get into the United Nations. Now I am not sure that the Chinese would even accept a seat. For if the U.N., without China, works out a disarmament policy among its members, how eager will a China in possession of hydrogen weapons be to join? Throughout the past decade it was argued on moral grounds that Mao's government should not be recognized by the U.N. Before the nineteen sixties are played out—if "mere biological survival" lasts that long—we may find ourselves insisting it is China's moral obligation to join.

Cold War: No one talks about "liberation" any more. The word seems as hollow today as the President's dramatic "unleashing" of Chiang Kai-shek seven years ago. But because we have given up bellicose rhetoric, can we say we have given up our interest in the peoples of the satellite nations? I should hope not. But whatever we do will have to be done by means of diplomacy and "power politics." As we learned from the Hungarian experience, military force is out of the question.

And here, it seems to me, are two more big questions for the nineteen sixties, the uses of diplomacy and the responsible use of political power. At some of its low points, the nineteen fifties proved that few Americans understand the uses of diplomacy. There were times when the people, or at least a vociferous section of the people, made it practically impossible for the nation's diplomats to do their work. In the sixties, it seems to me, the people as a whole will have to learn more about the meaning of diplomacy and the rules which govern it. Especially will we have to gain a deeper understanding, on the one hand, of the real limitations of diplomacy and of its possibilities, on the other.

Here, it seems, responsibility in great part falls directly upon the mass media of information and education. During the bad days of the nineteen fifties, the press and television, with notable exceptions, catered shamelessly to popular passions and prejudices. They did not try to lift the level of understanding of what our diplomats were up against. In some cases, to their shame, they even joined the howling mob, when they did not organize it in the first place. In one way or another all of us in those dark days let our diplomatic representatives down. Still, nothing is more clear as we move into the nineteen sixties than that we stand in almost desperate need of their wisdom. If diplomacy is to take the place of war, our diplomats require as much support from the American people during times of peace as the nation's generals can justly demand in wartime.

About "power politics"—It may seem strange to see a flat endorsement of such a thing in these pages. I am aware that the phrase is often used as if it were describing something dark and evil. But I use it nonetheless. For it seems to me that our greatest need is to learn how to use the power that is undoubtedly ours.

As we go into the nineteen sixties, the major moral problem the nation faces is how to use that power responsibly and wisely, in support of the nation's purposes and ideals abroad. To say this is to recognize the reality, the inevitability, of "power politics." The responsibility of holding power may be the least understood question of all those the nation faces. In the nineteen fifties we veered back and forth between what has been called "the illusion of American omnipotence" and the notion that power was *per se* immoral. I suspect that in the nineteen sixties our most lively debates will center on this question of how the nation's power should properly be used.

JOHN COGLEY.

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When has an armaments race ever led to anything but war?

De Gaulle and the Bomb

by ROBERT BARRAT

ON TWO RECENT occasions General de Gaulle has indicated that the French government now intends to build and test nuclear bombs. Last November he announced to the students of the *Ecole Militaire* that "since eventually France can be laid waste from virtually any point in the world, we must have a striking force capable of action anywhere." A week later the General added at a press conference: "If France is asked to renounce atomic armaments for herself, while others possess such weapons, she simply will not accede to the request."

These two texts, it should be noted, are susceptible of several interpretations. Like most of de Gaulle's statements, they seem to have been left deliberately ambiguous in order to provide room for political and diplomatic maneuvering.

One hypothesis about de Gaulle's intentions is that the French government actually plans to organize a striking force similar to those of the three big powers now in the atomic terror club: atomic submarines, intercontinental missiles and H-bombs. This is not impossible; despite what has been written to deny it, France could accomplish the task within a decade. The cost of such an effort, however, would run from five hundred to seven hundred billion francs a year. This means that France could reach this goal only by sacrificing nearly all the capital that will be available for equipment and modernization, and by setting up a military quasi-dictatorship. De Gaulle, I am convinced, is too intelligent to choose such a course.

Another possibility open to France would be to build up a limited striking force by 1966—the year advocated by the Guillaumat Defense Ministry. This force would consist of about ten bombs and several dozen Mirage IV heavy bombers, which would fly at a speed of over fifteen hundred miles per hour. But what would such a striking force be worth? It would be effective neither offensively (not even against the underdeveloped countries—witness England's failure at Suez) nor defensively, for the missiles of the big atomic powers would be falling on Paris before any of these heavy bombers could reach its objective.

M. Barrat, long associated with the Centre des Intellectuels Français, is The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Paris.

The purpose of building up an atomic striking force, therefore, can only be political, not military. If this second course were what is intended, it would have a two-fold purpose. The objective at home would be to offer the Army a consolation prize to make up for the virtually inevitable loss of Algeria, and to focus upon the atomic gadget the nationalistic passions aroused in the French people by twenty years of unbroken military reverses. The foreign policy objective would be to force the United States to transfer atomic weapons to France or to America's other European allies—or at least to transmit certain scientific secrets. "As American territory is itself subject to the Soviet missile threat, it would seem logical that a French deterrent pave the way for the creation of a European deterrent which would supplant the [presumably destroyed] American deterrent," as Raymond Aron has expressed it.

THE THIRD and final hypothesis that can be advanced to justify France's determination to have atomic bombs is based on the hope that France could then exert moral pressure on the other nations. When France has carried out a test explosion, in this view, she would announce, spectacularly, that she is renouncing further tests and production unilaterally, that unilaterally she is opening her installations to international inspection, that she is creating a technical assistance fund of half the saving resulting from the step, and that she invites all other countries to follow her lead.

"This policy, which would revive the humanistic and universalist tradition of France, would win for her far more prestige than any realizable power to strike" in the words of one of its advocates in the *Express*. Agreed. But I do not honestly believe that it can be realized. There has never been a State in which the army functioned as the principal pressure group, if not as a fourth political power, that has given proof of such a spirit of peace.

If de Gaulle had any intention of making such a gesture, why would he do it *after* the production of a bomb, and its setting off in the Sahara, rather than *before?* Should he not instead hasten to address the world in words like these: "France now has the scien-

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tific and technical capacity to produce her own A-bombs. Considering the threat that further explosions represent for mankind, however, she renounces that weapon and will consecrate her scientific genius and her wealth solely to the peaceful utilization of atomic energy."

The General has, however, made no such statement —which to me indicates that the decision to make the bomb and test it in the Sahara has definitely been taken. This is a momentous decision. Nonetheless, on this issue French public opinion seems anesthetized; it does not move an inch; not even word that the U.N. Assembly condemns further tests has materially affected opinion in France. "After all, why should France not have her own bomb, too? Is she not also a big power?" —this is the line of reasoning one hears, supposedly based on that common sense by which the average Frenchman sets such store.

But what value is there simply in having the bomb? Why should France follow this course? If most Frenchmen seem apathetic, there are some who disagree strongly with de Gaulle's decision. They point out, for instance, that it will be impossible to keep the doors of the atomic club closed to other nations if France succeeds in forcing them. After France has the weapon, Switzerland, Israel, Egypt, Germany and Italy will also want armaments and atomic secrets. Then the type of weapon which the United States bestows upon these nations would likewise be given by the Soviet Union to the European satellites, and perhaps to China as well. And when in history, they ask, has an armaments race ever led to anything but war?

THERE WILL never be a more propitious moment, Frenchmen who oppose de Gaulle on this matter argue, for reaching an agreement on atomic disarmament and even on general disarmament. The labors of the experts at Geneva have continued to show progress, they note. Perhaps if the *détente* between the Soviet and the West continues and expands, therefore, the summit meeting this spring could be devoted to the definitive renunciation by the Big Three of any further uncontrolled production or testing of thermonuclear devices. Under these circumstances, therefore, the determination of France to possess her own nuclear weapons only poses a serious threat to the present negotiations and jeopardizes still-fragile hopes of getting progressive disarmament under way at last.

Moreover, this argument continues, by exploding an atom bomb in the Sahara, France will knowingly perpetrate a crime against humanity. The scientists now know something of the effects of man-made radioactivity. So far, over two hundred atomic explosions have polluted the earth's atmosphere; each year the fall-out increases the number of victims of cancer and leukemia and adds to the cases of human abnormality. Even so, the full genetic effects of these explosions are not yet known, and yet France is now to be put in the position of adding to this peril.

Finally, the argument concludes, by her proposed action France will unquestionably alienate the African peoples who are directly menaced by the test explosion, and in so doing she will "thereby vitiate a future full of promise," to quote the Moroccan delegate to the U.N. At the same time this action will also turn world public opinion against the French Republic.

In various parts of the world there are scholars, intellectuals, ministers, priests, political leaders and simple citizens who are convinced that nuclear testing is a crime against humanity. France may claim that she has committed only a two-hundredth part of the crime, but in their eyes France will be no less guilty on this score, especially since she will be acting with premeditation. By this one action, then, France stands to lose that capital of humanism and universalism which remains its most cherished possession in the eyes of the world.

These, then, are some of the arguments advanced by a few in the name of reason and morality to oppose the policy of "grandeur"—a policy which is being utilized to drag France along a path contrary to her true vocation. Some of us, at least, are certain that the world does not want new atomic weapons from France; rather it seeks from her a defense of man, the highest value in creation. Believing this, we are convinced it would be reprehensible for France, despite the opposition of the U.N. and its allies, to go ahead with the nuclear test she has planned for the Sahara.

MAIN HALL: ST. NORBERT COLLEGE

It is a clever laddered building, pierced and curled,
And would go heaven-high but for the iron slate
That never crumbles. There is a turret on each side,
Three dangerously pointed dormers, near the top
A pigeon-place, a sparrow-place before, before that too
A place where any bird could summer if it wanted to.

The view is marvelous; one sees the novices each day
Waked to a dry wood and a dust not native to their sleep.
Each day in file beside the caved-in river edge they stand,
Eyes dropped and weighted, waiting for a breath of shape.
From right to right they circle, endlessly.

JOHN D. ENGELS.

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EFFORTS TOWARD REUNION

Monks of Unity

by DONALD ATTWATER

IT HAS TAKEN the summoning of an Ecumenical Council, and the papal declaration that among the subjects of its deliberation will be the disagreements that separate millions of Eastern Christians from the Roman Catholic Church, to interest large numbers of Catholics in the problems of Christian disunity.

Many of us have been too inclined simply to accept the existence of those whom we call—not always without a suggestion of patronage and condescension—"our separated brethren," and to think of them, when we think of them at all, merely in terms of "making converts" from among them. And in any case we have tended to identify Christians not in communion with Rome almost solely with those who are the heirs of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century in Western and Central Europe. But in fact the balance of the Church as an organization was upset, and a large proportion of her members lost to unity, long before that, principally by the gradual separation of the Eastern Orthodox, whose nerve-center was then at Constantinople. It is therefore a common opinion that reunion will have to begin where disunion began, in the East.

Whatever the unconcern of individual Catholics, the Church herself is not and can never be indifferent to those Christians who do not recognize her for what she claims to be. And among these it is only natural and right that Rome should in the first place be concerned for those whose Christian origins go back to the earlier days, who share with Catholics the priesthood and sacraments that Christ instituted, whose fundamental traditions of faith and worship and constitution are Catholic traditions—namely, the Orthodox and other Easterners. Here Pope John XXIII is not an innovator: his latest actions are simply manifestations of a long process.

The present stage of that process is generally reckoned to have begun under Pope Leo XIII, after the great international Eucharistic Congress at Jerusalem in 1893. Thirty years later the work was taken up with an equal vigor and generous spirit by Pius XI, and it would be difficult to exaggerate how much the present concern with Eastern Christians is due to that Pope. One of Pope Pius' first moves was to enlist the interest of the monks of St. Benedict. Pope Leo XIII had often emphasized that these monks, because of their history, life and spirit, form a natural link between East and West; it was he who entrusted them with the direction of the Greek College at Rome and the organization of a seminary of Syrian rite at Jerusalem. "Of all orders," Pope Leo said, "the Benedictines alone excite no mistrust among the Easterners."

In 1924 Pope Pius XI addressed a letter, *Equidem verba,* to the Abbot Primate of the confederated Benedictines, invoking the help of his monks "in the apostolic work of reconciliation with the brethren who are separated from us." He pointed out the reasons for the Benedictines' special suitability for this task, directed their attention particularly to the needs of Russian refugees, and looked forward to the day when there should be a whole monastic congregation of the Slav-Byzantine rite. That day has not yet come, but Pius XI's letter has borne other fruit.

ONE OF THE first monasteries to act on *Equidem verba* was the Abbey at Lisle, near Chicago, which eventually was responsible for the establishment of a Slav-Byzantine daughter house (now at Butler, Pa.), and which since 1956 has organized three union congresses. In Europe, other monasteries and individuals have undertaken comparable enterprises.

Outside the Benedictine confederation, the Olivetan Benedictines are active through the *Vita et Pax* movement and the house of Byzantine studies at Gelrode near Louvain, and the Cistercians of Casamari in Italy are responsible for the training of monks of the Ethiopic rite. Nor is the work confined to men: several monasteries of nuns have a part in it, such as those at Schootenhof, near Antwerp, and Cureglia in Switzerland. But it is not invidious to say that the most striking and best-known result of Pius XI's appeal is the establishment which is still often referred to as "Amay."

Even before 1924 the possibility of a Benedictine house devoted to the work of reunion had been under discussion in Belgium and elsewhere. Soon after *Equidem verba* one was founded by Dom Lambert

Mr. Attwater, the English writer and editor, has written widely on liturgical and ecumenical matters.

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Beauduin, a monk of Mont César, and formally established by Pius XI in 1926. Its first home was at Amay-sur-Meuse, between Liège and Namur; in 1939 it was moved to a former country mansion at Chevetogne, southeast of Namur.

The community at Chevetogne consists wholly of choir-monks (not necessarily in holy orders) and is international in composition—eight nationalities are represented today. The members are about equally divided between the Western and Byzantine rites: the Divine Office according to each and the Eucharistic Liturgy in Latin and Greek or Slavonic are sung every day in their respective churches. Public interest has made necessary the building of a commodious Byzantine church, which was consecrated by the Russian Bishop Paul Meletiev in 1957.

THE WORK of the Chevetogne monks has been summed up as helping "to prepare the ground for a restoration of union between the separated Eastern churches, especially the Russian, and Rome, by bringing about in both West and East a psychological atmosphere that shall be favorable to such a union: a mutual knowledge, understanding and esteem based on careful appreciation of their rich common inheritance from Christian antiquity—the teaching of the Fathers, monasticism, liturgical life" (Dom Roger Gazeau).

The members of the community are, in the first place, monks, living the dedicated life of prayer and worship in accordance with St. Benedict's Rule, and pursuing the learned studies which their particular aims call for. Every year a discussion week is held, under the auspices of the Sacred Eastern Congregation, in which Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant scholars take part. In addition, a constant succession of guests and visitors helps to maintain contacts on a wide and inclusive scale. Individual members of the community also visit Eastern monasteries in foreign lands (e.g. Mount Athos), and they hope one day to have a daughter monastic house of their own somewhere in the East. The Greek College at Rome is also under the charge of Chevetogne, by decision of Pope Pius XII.

From their foundation the monks have published a review, *Irénikon,* which has become a powerful medium for the diffusion of knowledge about Eastern theology, liturgy and history and also of information about relevant current events and movements. The review is conducted at a high level of scholarship and in an objective and friendly spirit; as a result it has earned wide approval among the Orthodox, whose theologians are happy to contribute to it, and many a Catholic has first learned to appreciate the Christian East from its pages. *Irénikon* is, indeed, "the most important documentary source on the Eastern churches published in the West."

Other Chevetogne publications are the *Irénikon Collection* of learned monographs, the two volumes of *L'Église et les églises, 1054-1954,* containing masterly theological and historical studies on the East-West schism, and three volumes of French liturgical translations, *La prière des églises de rite byzantin.* It is typical that in the recent, excellent reunion issue of *Worship* the illuminating article on Eastern piety was written by a Chevetogne monk. Notable work has also been done on Eastern iconography, and the monastery publishes extensive series of reproductions of icons that have had a continuing and ready sale among both Catholics and Orthodox.

In discussing the monks at Chevetogne and the role of the Benedictines in West-East relations, one must refer to Dom Gerard van Caloen, who founded the Abbey of St. Andrew at Bruges, restored the monastic congregation of Brazil, and was a missionary Bishop in that country. Seventy years ago he wrote: "Monks well-trained in the Greek language, customs and liturgy should go among them as brothers, living that monastic and liturgical life to which the Orthodox are so sincerely attached. 'Conversion' or proselytism would not be their business, but simply to establish centers of prayer, divine service and learning. . . . Such monasteries would be a strong influence in the direction of reunion of East and West. The example and teaching of these Catholic monks would dispel prejudice, and the absence of irritating polemics would be a great factor for good."

Bishop van Caloen, it is good to note, lived to read Pius XI's *Equidem verba* and to see the beginnings of Dom Beauduin's foundation at Amay. Were he alive today, he would be able to see at Chevetogne a flourishing community which incarnates in itself the principles expressed by Pope and Bishop on behalf of Christian unity.

THE ROCK

For courage, turn to Peter called the Rock.
It would put courage into anyone
to meditate on Simon, son of John,
selected by the Lord to feed His flock,
to be unchallenged keeper of the lock
and wielder of its keys; who had begun
by flourishing a sword; was soon undone;
and ended on the crowing of a cock.
O blessed, blustering saint, bullied by fear,
foredoomed in face of all your flock to fall;
even the lambs have heard that grievous story
and hear it, by your leave, year after year:
we build upon this rock of courage—all
your falls wept, but acknowledged; to Christ
the glory!

SISTER MARIS STELLA, C.S.J.

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THE SCREEN

WINTER POTPOURRI

THE MOVIE studios, hoping to catch the Christmas trade, have a way of rushing in at the year's end with a lot of new films. This year was no exception. Some deserve almost no mention and some are designed for children, but some merit consideration. Here's a quick run-down of late 1959 releases that will be filling or emptying theaters in early 1960.

Tiger Bay is a well-made English movie, a sort of psychological thriller mainly concerned with a young seaman, who returns to the Tiger Bay dock section of Cardiff and shoots his unfaithful fiancée, and with a little girl who witnesses the murder but likes the seaman so well she runs away with him. Under J. Lee Thompson's good direction, these roles are expertly played by Horst Buchholz, as the panicky sailor who's determined to escape, and by Hayley Mills, as the tomboyish little girl who has a propensity for getting into trouble. John Mills (Hayley's real-life father) is properly wise and stolid as the police superintendent who leads the skillful pursuit that gets extremely tense and complicated. The warm friendship and loyalty which develop between Hayley and Horst are excellently shown, with no suggestion of *Lolita*. The admirable black-and-white photography of the Cardiff district adds considerably to the film's realism and interest.

Operation Petticoat is brightened by the presence of Cary Grant as the commander of a submarine during World War II; Tony Curtis as his brassy junior officer, who's particularly adept at getting provisions that the sub needs; five attractive women, including Dina Merrill and Joan O'Brien, portraying nurses who are rescued by Curtis on the way to Australia; and a group of men making like the sub's crew. Some of the jokes about Curtis' prowess at scrounging and about the problems presented by women in the very close and crowded quarters of a submarine are rather amusing, but for a two-hour picture, the material runs thin. And the cast have little to rely on other than their charm.

The Gene Krupa Story purports to be just that, and if it is at all accurate, Mr. Krupa has cause for concern. He is portrayed as an egocentric with a passion only for himself, drums and women. After giving up his studies for the priesthood, for which he was not suited, he struggles along with the drums, finally makes the big time and allows success to go to his head. The main trouble with the film is not in the bouts with marijuana or drinking, but in its weak script, which never comes to grips with the man. Although Sal Mineo simulates the drummer well (Krupa himself does the excellent recordings) the difficult role is beyond him; and the film's anachronisms are no help. This is unfortunate, for there are interesting movie possibilities in a reliable and meaningful portrait of what makes Genie run.

Behind the Great Wall is Leonardo Bonzi's well-made travelogue about Red China. Although its narration is at times rather over-enthusiastic, its visuals are impressive. However critical one is of the Communist regime, it is well to see the country and the people. Scenes such as the tiger hunt, the primitive fishing with cormorants, the overwhelming May Day Parade and much of the scenery are magnificently photographed. Unfortunately the film is released here as a smellie in the new AromaRama process; and while some of the odors that blow through the theater, while we catch shots of food, flowers, incense or horses, fit the visuals quite well, others are merely confusing.

1001 Arabian Nights has been long in the making and devotees of Stephen Bosustow's first-rate animated-cartoon shorts have waited with bated breath. But if they're expecting anything as delightful as the little films about Gerald McBoing-Boing or Madeline or the near-sighted Mr. Magoo, they are going to be sadly disappointed. Bosustow's first full-length cartoon is, except for a few imaginative drawings of elegant Baghdad locales and the presence of Mr. Magoo as Aladdin's uncle, just another ordinary cartoon movie. But children will no doubt be thrilled by the hopped-up story of the Arabian Nights' Aladdin and the Princess and the Wicked Wazir.

Solomon and Sheba is a dull and tasteless retelling of the Old Testament story, which was expanded considerably by four writers but not improved by their efforts. An elaborate costume and spectacle affair, much of which was handsomely filmed in Spain (in Super Technirama-70 and Technicolor) the film is said to have cost six million. Out of fairness to Producer Ted Richmond, it must be said that a great deal of the movie was finished and had to be re-shot when Yul Brynner took over the Solomon role after the death of Tyrone Power, but even at that, a lot of money was wasted. Some of the sets and battle scenes are quite impressive; but the orgy sequence staged by Sheba (Gina Lollobrigida) is merely offensive.

Li'l Abner is an unimaginative screen version of the unimaginative musical play that Norman Panama and Melvin Frank fashioned from Al Capp's comic strip. The stage play with its plethora of Capp characters and Dogpatch and Washington sets wasn't much; but in turning it into a movie, Panama and Frank might at least have taken it out of doors and given it a cinematic treatment. Instead they have merely filmed their stage efforts; and the result is pretty stodgy. Perhaps the whole thing with its raucous jokes and chases was designed for children. If so, it should have been cleaned up.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"THE CHOICE"

St. John, N.B., Canada.

TO THE EDITORS: I was deeply interested in John Cogley's article "The Choice" [Nov. 6]. War, Mr. Cogley says, is "no longer a tolerable human institution," because it is no longer a rational instrument of attack or defense; where the end is mutual and indiscriminate destruction, the means to such an end can no longer be considered rational, and the employment of such means (the weapons of mass destruction) must certainly be immoral. The means of warfare had never indeed been merciful—"war is brutal and cruel. It has always been that."—and it has always been open to the conscience of the Catholic to reject the means of armed warfare in favor of a better way. But at least it had been possible in the past to maintain that a just war could be justly waged, under the firm conditions laid down by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Today, however, weapons of mass destruction, of which the consequences in genetic damage are unforeseeable, make nonsense of justice in war, as they make nonsense of the cardinal virtues of prudence and temperance and the theological virtues of hope and love. As Mr. Cogley points out, these weapons have forced upon Christians a plain choice: to make war with modern weapons; or to cease to make war at all.

But without war, asks Mr. Cogley, "what recourses do free people have to prevent enslavement? What can decent men do about a rampaging Hitler? Are we doomed forever to the kind of helplessness which prompted us to turn a deaf ear to the cries for help that came over the air as the Hungarian station went off the air in 1956?"

These are questions being asked by many Catholics today. May I attempt a very brief answer?

To have made war with "modern" weapons upon the armed oppressors of the Hungarian people would have involved possibly the destruction of large areas of Russia and of North America, probably of most of Europe, and almost certainly of the whole of Hungary. It is useless to offer freedom to an incinerated population.

How to deal with a "rampaging Hitler," with an aggressor bent on enslavement? In a disarmed world (I do not mean a partially but a completely disarmed world under a system of international inspection and control rigidly enforced by the U.N.), Hitler would have earned his bread and butter painting houses. A dictator is no more terrible than the armed forces he controls. After all, it was not the Nazi philosophy that was terrible, except in the sense of being terribly silly and terribly unpleasant. What made it terrible in effect was the fact that the Wehrmacht was able to translate Hitler's phantasms into the fact of Auschwitz and the destruction of religion and liberty in Europe.

Men will continue to lead good and evil lives, politically and privately, in any possible world. It is the mission of the Church and in this field the tremendous responsibility of the lay apostolate to tip the balance in favor of Christ, of Christian living and thinking. Meanwhile, in a disarmed world, in a world completely and permanently disarmed, under governments complying to the obvious advantage of their peoples, with a U.N. directive outlawing the manufacture of national armaments, ordinary men and women will at long last, and very gratefully, be able safely to beat the bombs and bombers into tractors. DENIS KNIGHT.

Milwaukee, Wisc.

TO THE EDITORS: I must, at last, object to Mr. Cogley's ruminations on modern war. In his remarks of November 6, 1959 ("The Choice") he asks, "Isn't it fairly common knowledge now, in high places and low, that we cannot destroy the Soviet without destroying ourselves, and that they cannot wipe us out without wiping themselves out?" This important question is put rather curiously but as it stands I would venture to answer it with a simple "No." One is thus forced to answer Mr. Cogley's question because war is a very practical matter and he consistently deals with it as if it were an abstraction of some kind.

"War is no longer a tolerable human institution; that is the fact of the matter," asserts Mr. Cogley. The fact of *what* matter—*what* war are we talking about? As far as future wars are concerned the facts are not yet in. They may or may not be intolerable; I have no doubt that the model Mr. Cogley has constructed in his own mind is that of an "intolerable" war. That kind of *a priori* theorizing should not be too difficult, but I do not know how useful it is.

One of the most prescient things said about *war* was said by a man who has had some considerable experience with *wars*. Sir Winston Churchill has remarked that "war is mainly a catalog of blunders." His point is one that I feel Mr. Cogley does not appreciate: it is a damned difficult job for one major nation to annihilate another—totally or even partially. Such an undertaking does not turn so much on how large your nuclear stockpile is but more on how you are able to make use of it. I am not certain that we could annihilate the Soviets—whatever that might entail; I am quite certain that they can not annihilate us. But this is not the most pressing issue before us nowadays. More pressing is the need to regain our equilibrium in the face of the weapons we have fabricated. It is true that there is a kind of Armageddon-complex among the top brass of S.A.C. but on the part of the Army-Navy leadership

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there is a real disposition towards discriminatory uses of force.

I am hopeful that as Mr. Cogley investigates these matters further he will become a little less pessimistic, a little less naive, and a little less abstract.

JAMES M. ROHERTY.

REPLY

Santa Barbara, Calif.

TO THE EDITORS: Let's just say that though it still might be a damned difficult job for one nation to annihilate another, it is not as difficult as it used to be. Both the Soviets and the U.S. have the wherewithal; both have the means of delivering it.

Of course *both* sides, not just our Army-Navy leadership, can agree to use their force with discrimination. Let us hope that if the chips were ever down, both sides would. But I believe it requires an overdose of naiveté to think that once the shooting started, all belligerents would not do all they could to get there first with the mostest. I can not believe that a showdown would be modeled after some abstract notion of war and would not be determined by existing weapons.

For these reasons, realism leads me to conclude that universal disarmament is the only ultimate solution to the nuclear dilemma. I am optimistic enough to believe that when the absurdity of the situation becomes clear to all parties, disarmament will be possible.

JOHN COGLEY.

NOVELIST, EDITOR, CRITIC

The Howells Revival

by JAMES B. STRONKS

MOST AMERICANS—especially those whose intimacy with the subject dates from a sophomore "survey" course of thirty years ago—will tell you that William Dean Howells wrote dainty, dull, dated novels, such as *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (sometimes they call it *Silas Marner*), which no one has been able to read since about 1895. As a matter of fact, they are partly right.

In his later years the once-popular Howells was himself ruefully aware of his loss of vogue. "I am comparatively a dead cult," he wrote to his old friend Henry James, "with my statues cut down and the grass growing over them in the pale moonlight." But on Howells' seventy-fifth birthday James reassured him: "The critical intelligence," he wrote from England, "has not at all begun to render you its tribute. . . . Your really beautiful time will come." James, who was having his own troubles, may or may not have been perfectly sincere, for he knew that his words were to be read aloud at a testimonial banquet for Howells (one which the President of the United States came up from Washington to attend—which fact alone suggests that Howells was a literary institution unknown in our time). But James' prophecy of a discerning latter-day appreciation of Howells has begun to come true in an accelerating barrage of articles and books.

Except for Van Wyck Brooks' new book, however, the Howells "revival" has been a purely academic affair, scarcely to be compared with the widespread rereading of James which began in the middle 1930's. Those of his novels lately reissued are all textbook editions; the articles about him have appeared in journals read only by professors; and the books about him (ten in the last five years) are published only by university presses as a losing proposition.

That Howells' fiction is currently unfashionable is too bad. For not to know his best novels (*A Modern Instance, A Hazard of New Fortunes, Indian Summer* —even the titles are little-known) is to deny oneself the pleasure of seeing a superior talent in almost perfect control of its chosen province. But the many-sided Howells did much more than write novels, and the growing interest in him today stems also from his key role as editor, critic, and influence. In this triple combination he was a decisive and dominant force upon American letters such as we have not had since and will likely not see again.

YOUNG Will Howells was a self-educated printer and poet in Ohio who as a boy taught himself German, Spanish, French and Italian. (He later became a lecturer at Harvard on Italian literature, and was to decline professorships there and at Johns Hopkins.) By the 1870's the young Westerner, now "Boston-plated," had won the editorship of the august *Atlantic Monthly*, the most influential periodical of the

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decade, where he gave a priceless boost to the early careers, of, among others, Henry James and Mark Twain, his antithetical cronies, and where his reviews constituted what Twain called "the critical court of last resort" in this country. By opening the magazine to writers west and south of Boston he presided over the broadening of American literature after the Civil War, and by introducing the great French, Scandinavian, and Russian authors to readers of the *Atlantic* (and later *Harper's*) he was the main agent in the weaning and sophistication of an American reading public inclined to hanker for the likes of *Trilby, Ben-Hur,* and *Barriers Burned Away.*

By the 1880's Howells was also one of our two best novelists, the other being James, with whom he was invariably grouped by his contemporaries (if not by James himself). And in both the 1880's and 1890's Howells was the most influential critic in the country. In particular he was captain of the upsurgent new realists and the central figure in their war on the romanticists, an angry controversy that filled the literary columns for years and which permanently changed our literature. After 1900, however, when younger and bolder authors such as Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Theodore Dreiser had taken the lead in realism, the aging Howells settled into "The Editor's Easy Chair" in *Harper's,* a benevolent sage who, if he was popularly esteemed as "the dean of American letters," was an increasingly obsolete one.

Thus Howells, who died in 1920 at the age of eighty-three, lived and wrote for twenty-five years after his militant, provocative days as a critic were over. And before he left the scene his blander "realism" and politer tradition had been outdistanced and outdated by the liberated young rebels who emerged about the time of the first world war, H. L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis prominent among them. It was no great surprise that they pounced upon Howells, the immensely respectable institution, and upon his decorous, sexless fiction as convenient examples of what they detested about the genteel decades. Their hatchet-jobs on "the dean" were probably salutary for American writing just then, and in any case they were inevitable. But rather often they censured his work by the more sophisticated standards of a later generation, a more intense and complicated one—a test by which Mencken's and Lewis's own dated work has shrunk today. Their indictment of Howells, which still colors most literary histories, is in distinct need of the calm and better-informed revision it is now getting.

IT IS little wonder that Howells' true views have been neglected, half-buried as they have been among the staggering volume of his total work. For in his nearly seventy years of continuous publication, he wrote, in addition to nearly two hundred books, no fewer than one thousand literary essays—all the way from one on Thackeray in 1859 to one on Robert Frost in 1915. Now at last many of the best of these have been made accessible in *"Criticism and Fiction" and Other Essays* (New York University Press. $6.), edited by Professors Clara and Rudolph Kirk, of Rutgers.

The title comes from a little manifesto, reprinted here for the first time in fifty years, in which Howells had his say about the superiority, both aesthetic and ethical, as it seemed to him, of realism and naturalism over traditional modes of story-telling. Contemptuous of best-selling historical romances ("the swashbuckler swashing on his buckler"), Howells, who greatly admired Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy, was disrespectful toward most other English fiction, and especially toward the sentimentality and authorial self-indulgence in the novels of the revered Thackeray and Dickens. It was all highly provocative in its day. "This man," began one incensed English reviewer, "has placed himself beyond the pale of decency." The Kirks' anthology reprints also the best of Howells' criticism of the more significant American authors between the Civil War and the World War; and it includes his enthusiastic essays upon Turgenev, Zola, Valdés, Björnson, Ibsen, Hardy, and, the greatest of his literary passions, Tolstoy.

The anthology, with its scrupulous scholarly apparatus, is indispensable for those who will pretend hereafter to be closely informed about the literary temper of the age of James and Howells. To the more general audience these essays will appeal for their sophisticated intelligence, for their sensitivity and grace in dealing with major authors, and for the pertinence today of Howells' wise, sane, and humane values, both literary and social. In fact, it is an act of justice that these essays have been rescued, for they bring to light many forgotten, generally unexpected values for whose presumed absence Howells has been roundly damned.

A favorite charge against him, for example, has been that he was irresponsibly optimistic, having once written among some remarks on Dostoevsky that "the smiling aspects" of life seemed just then (1886) to be the ones most often dealt with by our novelists. These three words have enjoyed remarkable mileage. Misread and taken out of context, they have brought upon Howells salvoes of twentieth-century abuse and bad temper. Ignored is the fact that his fiction, pervaded with irony, usually deals with disillusionment, and that he felt life to be "mainly sad everywhere." Overlooked is the fact that he praised the almost intolerable pessimism in E. W. Howe's *Story of a Country Town* for being "honest" and "true" (nearly forty years before Mencken was to do so in the *Smart Set*). And forgotten is his disheartened view, among much else in this vein, that "after fifty years of optimistic content

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with civilization and its ability to come out all right in the end, I now abhor it, and feel that it is coming out all wrong in the end, unless it bases itself anew on a real [i.e., Christian-socialist] equality."

Howells' fiction is blamed for being prudish—that is to say, of his time. And it most certainly was. Yet his criticism aggressively championed the depiction of ugly, sordid, immoral facts of life by all kinds of strenuously anti-genteel realists. He preferred decency, but not at the expense of truth: "If it is true, is it not well for us to know it?" The young Hamlin Garland's unpalatable stories in the 1880's, for example, harsher than any in English up to that time, were praised by Howells for their "fine courage to leave a fact with a reader, ungarnished and unvarnished, which is almost the rarest trait in an Anglo-Saxon writer, so infantile and feeble is the custom of our art. . . ."

The same combative tone and scorn for popular taste appeared in his admiration for Stephen Crane's *Maggie,* a tale of a prostitute, for which Howells tried in vain to find a publisher. In the teeth of late-Victorian distaste for Crane's unflinching candor and ugly subject, Howells ahead of his day saw the "ideal of artistic beauty which is as present in the working out of this poor girl's squalid romance as in any classic fable." Characteristically, he added a stinger: "This will be foolishness, I know, to the many foolish people who cannot discriminate between the material and the treatment in art, and think that beauty is inseparable from daintiness and prettiness, but I do not speak to them."

And in essays which are strikingly modern in tone he praised Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* for being "one impassioned cry of the austerest morality" and hailed in Zola "the depth and strength of his personal conscience, capable of the austere puritanism which underlies the so-called immoralities of his books." Though he hid *Germinal* from his children, and though the English jailed Zola's London publisher for contributing to public immorality, the "prudish" Howells flatly pronounced Zola's books to be "most terribly and pitilessly moral." They "may disgust, but they will not deprave," he wrote, and drove home his view with a vengeance: "Only those already rotten can scent corruption in them, and these, I think, may be deceived by effluvia from within themselves."

TO BE SURE, such modern views in Howells' criticism do not disprove the fact of his fastidiousness in treating—or rather not treating—sex and squalor in his own fiction. But they suggest that the notion of him as a "pious old maid whose greatest delight was to have tea at the parsonage"—as Sinclair Lewis called him in his Nobel Prize speech in 1930—does Howells a good deal less than justice. What is more, such a violent oversimplification falsifies our understanding of the age of Howells and James and Twain, post-Civil War America, which bred our own times. Nor does such a view square with Howells' bitter and passionately engaged social criticism, or his championship of unpopular liberal causes.

The forgotten fact is that until the mid-1890's Howells' criticism, social and literary, was often *avant garde* for his generation, and that large numbers of the "best people" distrusted and censured him for it. As Van Wyck Brooks has concluded, it would be difficult really to implicate Howells in what Santayana called the "genteel tradition"—though he is so pigeonholed by practically all the textbooks. And that such unHowellsian moderns as Crane, Norris, and Dreiser, each of them powerfully aware of Howells' precedent in realistic fiction, testified a debt to him helps to make clear his connection, through *Maggie* and *McTeague* and *Sister Carrie,* with American writing today.

The present revival of interest in Howells is by no means a revisionist conspiracy to defend certain blinkers on his "vision" which Henry James rightly deplored; in fact, it documents them in depth. But in seeing Howells steadily and whole for the first time, it is rescuing him from the strictures which his admirable fiction and his perceptive criticism have endured at the hands of the captious and the ignorant.

Sincere or not, James called the turn exactly when in 1912 he predicted to Howells that, "The more inquiringly and perceivingly [criticism shall study] the American life we used to know; the more it shall be moved by the analytic and historic spirit; the more indispensable . . . you will be found." For it is now clear, even on dim days in the sophomore survey courses, that if we want to know our artistic and intellectual genealogy, a true view of Howells—both his ideas and his influence—is a necessity.

Fortunately it remains a pleasure as well. It is a delight to discover, in this most under-rated American novelist, the deft mastery which, at its frequent best, could do many things better even than James could at his best. And it will be nice all around if Van Wyck Brooks' new book, *Howells: His Life and World* (Dutton. $5.00), can tempt readers into re-locating the long Howells' shelf in the public library, or even buying the paperbound reprints at some college bookstore. Brooks' sympathy and his wide knowledge of the period equip him to write well about Howells. Though specialists will, with a good deal of justice, call his book shallow and sometimes irrelevant, it is, for everyone else, clearly the best single book about Howells as a man. And it is gratifying that in his graceful and interesting biography the Howells revival has at last escaped from the universities and produced something that may wake real general interest in this rich, major American talent.

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Newby's Precise and Limited Talent

A GUEST AND HIS GOING. By P.H. Newby. Knopf. $3.75.

By ROBERT GUTWILLIG

IN MY most extravagant fantasies the interviewer from the Sunday *Times* is asking, "And whom, Mr. Gutwillig, do you regard as the most over-rated novelist of the twentieth century?"

"E. M. Forster," I say sadly, sighting down my cigarillo.

"What, then, is the most over-rated novel?"

"Why, sir, *A Passage to India.*"

This may seem both a gratuitous attack and a singularly irrelevant way of beginning a review of P. H. Newby's latest novel, *A Guest and His Going.* To gratuitousness I plead guilty. I have been waiting for years for Mr. Forster to change his mind and favor us with another novel, but the man has finally outsilenced me. It isn't that I think Mr. Forster is not a fine writer. He is indeed. But he is not a patch on, say, Henry James to whom he is often compared to advantage these days. To irrelevance I plead innocent. By this time, it should be as clear to Mr. Newby's American audience as it is to his British readers that he is the most important and most successful adapter of Mr. Forster's techniques in the art of the novel.

The technique—to approach the central situation indirectly as if with disinterest or distaste or both, to present the characters and their motivations obliquely while describing their world and their physical peculiarities with brilliant brevity, and never to explain anything—the technique is certainly a valid and interesting one. When it works, the result is a marvelously satisfying serio-comic novel, such as Mr. Forster's *Howard's End* or this new book of Mr. Newby's. When it doesn't work the result is a curious amalgam of over-simplification and a hopefully metaphysical vacuum, such as Mr. Newby's previous novel, *Revolution and Roses.*

Both Forster and Newby regard the human situation and human beings as patently absurd; absurdly funny or absurdly sad, it's all the same thing. Both are thus able to sidestep nimbly the workaday problems of character development and motivation by conjuring up mad impulses and improbable results. If things are slowing down or if they've worked themselves into a tight spot, then let old Napier Hillingdon blow a poison dart into an Egyptian nationalist's neck. That's the way people are, they say, unpredictable. I, for one, agree. Yet, until this novel, neither Forster nor Newby has ever created a particularly memorable character, and this despite their ability to traipse about in the minds of all their people with jaunty ease.

In England, at present, E. M. Forster is regarded with the proper amounts of pride and prejudice normally reserved for their institutions and the dead, while P. H. Newby, very much alive and snickering, is on the skids. "Just what *is* the fellow saying?" the reviewers are beginning to ask themselves, each other and their readers.

In *A Guest and His Going,* set in London during the Suez summer madness, most of the characters in Newby's two previous novels, *The Picnic at Sakkara* and *Revolution and Roses,* which took place in Egypt, are turned loose on each other. But, let me hasten to add, the novel stands upright on its own, for this series is less tightly bound together in time and tension than are Lawrence Durrell's Egyptian novels. Oddly enough, Mr. Durrell's and Mr. Newby's views of Egypt and the Egyptians are not as widely dissimilar as one first thinks.

Anyway, Mr. Newby's protagonist, Edgar Perry, who formerly

The Airport of My Aunt Was on the Table

Tilted, breathless in its floated gait,
The wheeling Piper Cub sloped safely down
Past the windvane's flying yellow:
Thus did my admiring aunt extrapolate
The floated moth whose acorn-stippled wing
Twitched him from the curtain's sunny billow
To the old lace tablecloth.
My aunt was slow and blue with air-
Ports, runways, and her rimless glasses took
Targets at zero in the middle space:
As often as her kindly face went fair
With reading Whittier or Lowell
Her eyes bent far upon some tiny hook
Of flight whose Grim & Goggled ace
Screwed outward to an aerial pole.

Gray hair and needlepoint; in that shut town
Her lamp burned up the early hours;
The moon burned planes beyond the nearby dyke;
Between which formal sisterhood of flares
Those young, those very flowers
Of men who split the clouds to hike
The blinded veins of night toward buried ports
May well have sensed her, mending pillow ears
But listening upward with an absent frown,
As they fought demons in the crackling struts.

JOSEPH ENGLISH.

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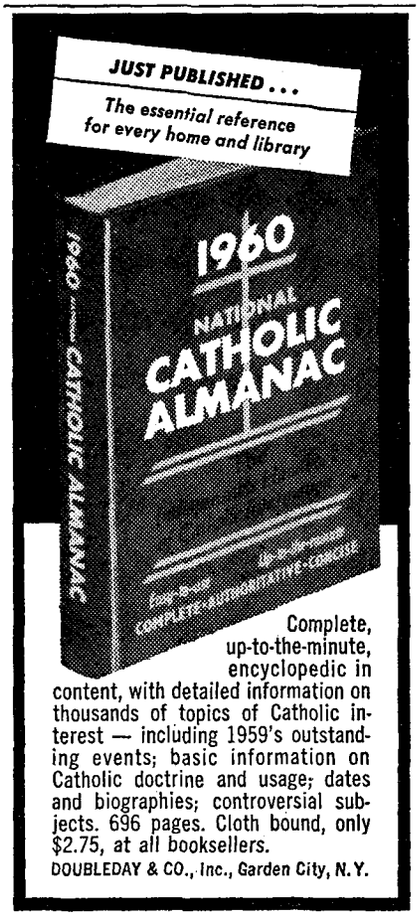
taught English at a university in Cairo and now runs a school where English is taught to foreigners, is visited by a former Egyptian pupil, Muawiya, who had once pretended to try to assassinate him. Muawiya remains his lunatic, contradictory, infuriating, charming self, promptly running off with a car, cracking it up and taking refuge in the Egyptian Embassy. Muawiya is perhaps the least of Perry's problems: his difficult wife no longer loves him; he is reaching middle age; and half a dozen other diverting figures—and a world suddenly gone mad—cavort giddily around him.

Perry's problem and the problem of the novel is simply (or complicatedly) what does one do when one can no longer separate the private and public worlds, and what does one do when both worlds go mad simultaneously? One goes on, Mr. Newby tells us, doing the best one can, doing what one thinks is right and good despite the unequal odds and despite the chances that one is often wrong and/or ludicrous. This may not be the first time someone has said these brave words, but they stand repetition, and Mr. Newby says them well.

The marvelous thing about *A Guest and His Going* is that everything works. There is no sag in the middle, as in the previous books; the dull characters, with two exceptions, have fled; and everyone is alternately funny and pathetic, sometimes, miracle of miracles, simultaneously. The action and the actors are sometimes bright and sometimes murky, as though first seen through a lighted scrim and then heard from behind a darkened one. Finally, Perry is the best character Newby has ever attempted. He is more than believable: he is one of us.

Perhaps, by stressing E. M. Forster's and P. H. Newby's similarities and neglecting their very real and very obvious differences in order to make my small point, I have done both an injustice. For Newby is very much his own man, and the final impression one draws from *A Guest and His Going* is of a precise and limited talent dealing precisely and gracefully with a world not of his own making or ordering. There are not many writers who can come close to this.



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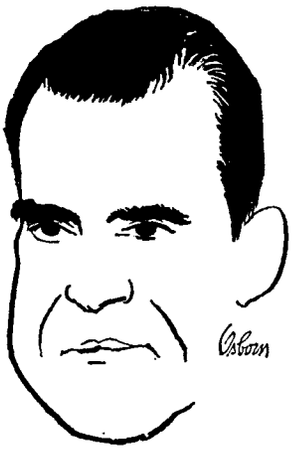
Hagiographic

LUCINIE. By M. L. Pascal-Dasque. Translated by Gary MacEoin. P. J. Kenedy & Sons. $3.75.

By PHILIP DEASY

THE FIRST character met in *Lucinie* is Sister Dominique, the Mother Superior of a community of French nursing Sisters stationed in an Algerian town. It is a summer afternoon and Sister Dominique is sitting in her favorite convent room with her linen basket. She picks up the cap of one of her younger nuns, Sister Lucinie. There follows this passage: "This nun caused the Mother Superior her greatest doubts. What would she be able to say about her when she reported on her term of office, during her summer trip to the mother-



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house? A letter from the Mother General had come with this young woman. 'I want you,' it said, 'to bear in mind Sister Lucinie's extreme youth and gloss over an occasional outburst of enthusiasm. I am entrusting to you a very sensitive nun, and I believe her moral worth goes far beyond what one finds in the average Sister. But this sensitivity runs the risk of becoming the stumbling block on which such fine promise may shatter. . . .'"

At this point the reader will undoubtedly say, "So. Another nun's story, and in the end, perhaps, another leap over the wall." Well *Lucinie* isn't quite that. Sister Lucinie does leave her convent in the end, but she leaves it in the most unbelievably edifying of deaths. Flights of angels indeed sing her to her rest. In fact Lucinie herself has become an angel. As her Mother General says of her, "Her work, her virtue, and this final detachment that seems so painful, all of that was accomplished in her without a struggle, as if only the body played a part and the soul had always been perfect. That is why I see in her an angel rather than a saint. . . ." How Sister Lucinie became an angel is the story of *Lucinie*. It is also its basic shortcoming. Angels aren't the stuff (if that's the word) out of which good novels are made.

What M. Pascal-Dasque, a French grandmother who has lived in Algeria all her life, has tried and failed to make convincing, is the portrayal of a young nun who comes to be favored by direct visitations from God, God in the form of a great force or weight, "crowding in on her, pressing her against the walls, concentrating His very Self in a dominating and uncomprehended thought." Under the power of this tremendous pressure Sister Lucinie works two miracles. She raises one young woman from the dead, and restores to full health the paralytic limbs of another. Each miracle is followed by a court of inquiry set up, respectively, by two Bishops. At the second inquiry, at which beside the Bishop there are present a young priest and three Mothers Superior, Sister Lucinie, under power of the God-force, goes off into an ecstasy. This evidently satisfies the priest, who had suggested "casually," "Could you not prove your power for us by some act of no significance but sufficiently extraordinary to compel our acceptance?" When Lucinie came out of her ecstasy, she "recalled that she was in the Bishop's presence, but the world's protocol no longer concerned her."

From the time, about a hundred pages from the end of the novel, when the Visitatrix to the overseas houses of the Order begins to question Lucinie about her extraordinary experiences, the hagiographic goo gets thicker and thicker. Treacle abounds. To those even faintly familiar with saints' lives, particularly the lives of saintly nuns like the Little Flower, the last two chapters of *Lucinie* will surely read like a badly overdone parody.

Early in her investigation, Mother Cecile, the Visitatrix, comes to one conclusion: "Sister Lucinie shines too brightly for the normal gloom of daily life." She certainly does. and from at least one gloomy reviewer rises the fervent hope that in the new decade of the sixties a moratorium in Catholic fiction will be declared on saints, angels and the many miracle workers. Let us now just have a few credible human beings.

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Modern Urban Life

WILDER STONE. By John Leggett. Harper. $3.95.

By THOMAS P. McDONNELL

IN MANY ways this is a very conservative, and even old-fashioned, example of the novel form in our time. That is to say, one does not often expect to read a contemporary novel in which the-man-who-changed theme carries the principal weight of the plot. But here it is.

So far removed have most of us become from considerations of mere plot, that it is slightly embarrassing to mention it at all. For it is almost a truism that the subjectivity of the artist himself has emerged as the dominant theme of much modern fiction. And it is not the function of the subjective mode to resolve, but simply to reveal. But in *Wilder Stone* all the loose strands which are found at the beginning of the novel, and ingeniously entangled throughout, are, in the end, finally tied into one conclusive and neat little knot.

Wilder Stone, who works in a New York real estate office, seems about as prosaic a character as one might meet. The jacket blurb observes that Mr. Leggett "has created a man who might well be called the American anti-hero." But this, in keeping with the nature of blurbism, seems to be, at the very least, an exaggeration. For it is not that the hero is so ordinary as to be anti-heroic (the whole novel turns on the inability of its chief character to make ordinary decisions). It seems, rather, that something close to a false sense of empathy engages the reader's attention rather than what was in-

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tended—a meaningful involvement in the authentic revelation of the human predicament.

What this book does possess, however, is a milieu of a quite particular kind. It is an astonishing social image of our urban white-collardom, and especially of those instances when the collar seems to get a little too tight for comfortable wear: the endless cups of coffee; lunches eaten hastily in cheap restaurants; the interminable catching and missing of ferries, trains, and busses; the inter-office political game of promotion by survival of the wiliest; restless weekends in Connecticut; the ritual of tribal approval of prospective financées; and, in the case of Wilder Stone, the all but smothering effect of the feminine domination of his own particular world.

The men, in fact, are consistently the weakest figures in the book, and their relationships are always tenuous at best. It is, moreover, the tenuousness of the relationship between Wilder Stone and his twelve-year-old son which comprises what many may wish to accept as the chief motivation of the book.

More than anything else, however, *Wilder Stone* is an evocation of the white Protestant milieu in modern urban life. It is difficult to do this in any way that may not be interpreted as derogatory to the particular sensibilities involved, but Mr. Leggett is scrupulous in his presentation of the assumptions, problems and responses present in this milieu. ("There was the face," muses Wilder Stone on the verge of premarital seduction, "of his Protestant upbringing which had given him the strong notion that to sleep with a nice girl was an evil act, that in the accomplishment of his venal purpose he would spoil her—for him, for her, for the whole world to see.")

In view of the growing interest, popular and serious, in religion, we ought not to dodge, on the literary level, the dichotomy which exists between the awareness of sin as temporary inconvenience and the moral impact of sin as a personally responsible disturbance in the life of grace.

Finally, a word about style and technique. Unlike so many contemporary novels, from Kerouac to Beckett, Mr. Leggett does not engage in any struggle with form in language; it is strictly functional, completely serviceable to its purpose of story-telling. But in reading *Wilder Stone* one frequently has the feeling that one has seen it all before—in John P. Marquand, for example. In fact, the technique is one in which even the flashbacks have flashbacks. But this is a fine first novel, however derivative, and it should be recognized for its own considerable achievement.

"Let us face it, *the United States Congress is not Lorenzo the Magnificent. It is tempting to gaze up at the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and sigh for publicly sponsored art. But it is necessary, whatever the political circumstance, to gaze at some of the offsetting monstrosities the state has built. A long walk around the castle of Mafra in Portugal. Or—to return to the modern context—a long day with the British Broadcasting Company. Any day will do; they are all long.*"

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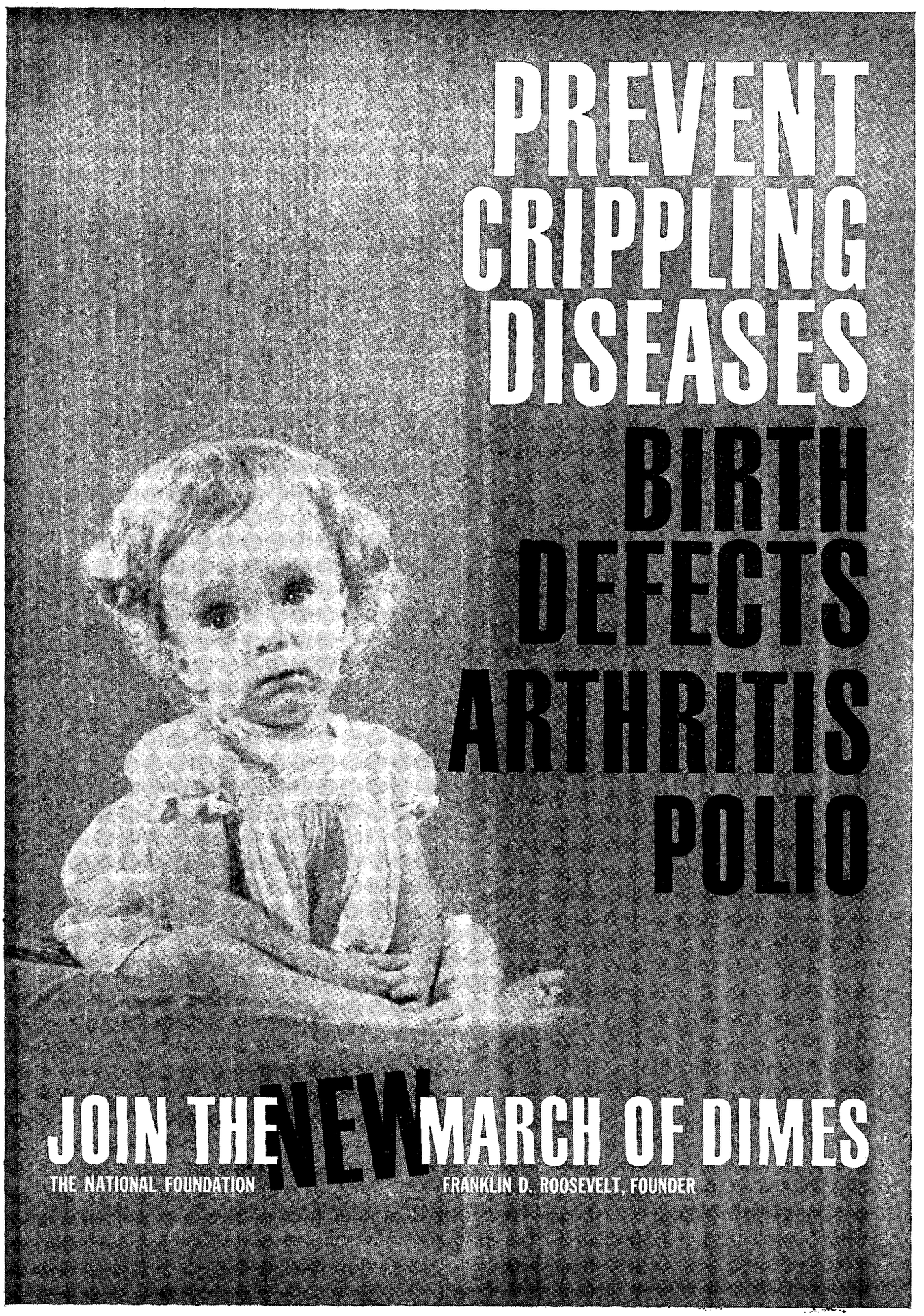

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